

# Landcare matters

Lake Clifton Sub-catchment



Edition 23  
December 2024

Welcome to the 23rd edition of Landcare Matters: Newsletter of the Lake Clifton Stewardship Program – a program supporting landowners for healthy habitats and waterways in the Lake Clifton sub-catchment.

## Celebrating the Holly-leaved Banksia for Christmas

What better plant to celebrate this Christmas than the Holly-leaved Banksia (*Banksia ilicifolia*)? It can regenerate vegetatively from epicormic shoots after bushfires and is generally easy to propagate from seed. Seed production can be unreliable however, particularly following periods of low rainfall.



*Banksia ilicifolia* (Image PHCC - Mick Davis)

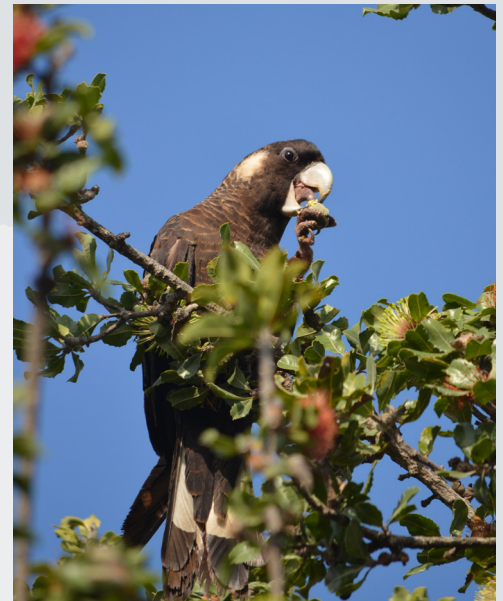
Like all Banksias, *B. ilicifolia* is excellent for attracting a range of bird species, particularly honey eating birds and Black Cockatoos.

It belongs to a subgenus of three closely related Banksia species (including *B. cuneata* and *B. oligantha*) which differ than other Banksias as the flowers are dome-shaped heads rather than flower spikes that are characteristic of Banksia.

Flowers occur mainly in late winter to early summer, so if you are fortunate enough to have this species in your bushland or garden, take time this Christmas with your feathered friends to admire the beautiful *Banksia ilicifolia*.

To spread the Christmas joy, PHCC will continue to provide this important species in our next Lake Clifton Seedling Giveaway.

We hope to see you there in May 2025.



Carnaby foraging on *B. ilicifolia* (Image PHCC - Karen Bettink)



## Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

PHCC would like to wish everyone a safe and happy Christmas and New Year period.



- Why do crabs never give to charity? Because they're shellfish!
- For a fungi to grow - you must give it as mushroom as possible.
- Nature is so resourceful – It can make dew with just water!



## Lake Clifton Rabbit Workshop

Thank you to all the landholders who participated in our Rabbit Workshop on Saturday 7 December. Landholders at Herron and Lake Clifton, and several other areas within our Catchment, see the impacts rabbits can have on native flora and fauna. They graze on crops, prevent native plant regeneration, undermine buildings and make land unstable and unusable. Rabbits are currently one of the greatest threats to Woodlands in the Lake Clifton, Herron and Dawesville areas.

This short video, sent in by a Lake Clifton landholder, shows the extend of the problem:

<https://vimeo.com/1046296899>

At densities like this, all unprotected emerging seedlings get demolished and effective control becomes more challenging.

To support landholders that have Banksia or Tuart Woodlands and live in the Dawesville, Herron and Lake Clifton areas, PHCC are hosting a series of Rabbit Workshops in collaboration with the PHBG.

The first workshop (7 December) focused on warren identification and mapping, warren fumigation and warren destruction, and the full suite of control methods available.

At the event, PHCC took expressions of interest from landholders seeking financial and/or technical support with rabbit control. Some of these pest control activities will be supported by our World for Woodlands Project and if you are one of the landholders who registered, we'll reach out to you in the New Year. If you aren't registered but are interested, contact PHCC to register for the next round starting in July. In the meantime, please commence your identification and mapping of all rabbit warrens on your property through FeralScan at <https://feralscan.org.au/>.

Unfortunately, with any control method, there are risks to non-target wildlife. These risks can be mitigated or reduced by adhering to recommended guidelines and by effective monitoring. PHCC and PHBG have fauna cameras to loan if you have concerns or are unsure about what native fauna may be impacted by your

selected control method. If you would like to register for 1080 and/or Calicivirus, contact the PHBG for information and to assess your eligibility. Thank you to the PHBG for your support and presentation at this workshop (despite the power outage). If you want more information on their Cross-tenure Invasive Species Program (CrISP), which supports pest control activities within declared pest hotspots on public land, see their website: <https://www.phbg.org/home>

As an additional mop-up control method, you can register for the Farmer Assist Program for professional rabbit shooting on your property, at no cost to landholders. Thank you to Jim Gow from Farmer Assist for attending and presenting at our Rabbit Workshop. You can register for Farmer Assist through their website: <https://farmerassist.com.au/>

*This project is funded by the Australian Government Natural Heritage Trust and delivered by PHCC, a member of the Commonwealth Regional Delivery Partners panel.*





### Perennial grasses – not just a pasture thing!

Perennial grasses are possibly the most underrated species when landholders think about restoring Banksia or Tuart Woodlands, but they have an important ecological role. Grasses create a microclimate for smaller animals and insects, boost biodiversity and are an important part of the diet of the many Australian fauna. They can be used to stabilise and regenerate soils, rehabilitate waterways and for grazing. Native grasses provide habitat for Quenda, reptiles and insects.

Our local Grasses are also tough! The strong root systems can penetrate most soil types, they are easy to grow and can tolerate disturbance and minimal water. Consider planting and protecting native grasses on your property to assist with soil health and to increase fauna diversity on your property. For Banksia and Tuart Woodlands in the Lake Clifton area, the following native perennial grasses are

ideal to include your next species list for revegetation and are readily available at many local nurseries:

#### ***Austrostipa elegantissima* (Feather Speargrass)**

Called speargrass because of the sharp point at the base of each seed husk and, as the name suggests, the flower head has a soft, silvery white, and fluffy appearance. It is good for landscaping and can grow to 2m tall if supported by surrounding vegetation. Flowers from Aug – Jan. Important food source and habitat for small birds, butterflies and lizards. Caterpillar food plant for native butterfly species.

#### ***Austrostipa flavescens* (Tall Speargrass)**

Tall Speargrass is an easy-to-grow grass with attractive silver flowers and seed-heads. Tufted, shortly rhizomatous grass to 1.2m tall. Flower-head is dense and

loosely branching to 30cm long. Clusters of flower buds are dark brown to black when mature and lightly covered with golden hairs. Like other *Austrostipa*, it is an important food source for native butterflies and insects.

#### ***Microlaena stipoides* (Weeping Grass)**

Grows from rhizomes, or runners, with drooping stems that can reach 60cm. Flowers from Sep - Nov. Grows in damp shady areas. Once the seed has been shed, the yellow stem usually curves and bends making this plant quite distinctive. It produces high quality feed that is also highly digestible.

Remember some of our native grasses look very similar to invasive grasses, such as Veldt grass, particularly when not in flower, so take care to correctly identify your grass species prior to undertaking weed control.



*Austrostipa elegantissima* (Feather Speargrass) Image by Friends of Queens Park Bushland



*Austrostipa flavescens* (Tall Speargrass) Image by Rewild Perth



*Microlaena stipoides* (Weeping Grass) Image by Pat Enright



## Bindjareb Djilba (Peel-Harvey) Estuary Forum: A Successful Gathering!

On Tuesday 19 November, more than 80 people gathered at Peel Thunder Stadium for the Bindjareb Djilba (Peel-Harvey) Estuary Forum, where they learnt about the state of the Peel-Harvey Estuary and the ongoing efforts to protect and restore it.

The forum featured a range of speakers including Malcolm Robb, Georgina Evan and Dr. Svenja Tulipan from DWER, Dr. Alan Cottingham from Murdoch University, Ellen Walker from Earthwhile,

and Danielle Eyre from PHCC, who shared valuable insights on the health of our Peel-Harvey Estuary and the ongoing efforts to protect its ecological, cultural, and economic values.

This forum is part of the broader Bindjareb Djilba (Peel-Harvey Estuary) Protection Plan and the Healthy Estuaries WA initiative—a key State Government project focused on improving the water quality of this vital ecosystem.

We were so grateful to everyone who attended and contributed to the important discussions around the health of our estuary!

For more information, see:

- [Bindjareb Djilba \(Peel-Harvey\) Projection Plan](#)
- [Healthy Estuaries WA \(HEWA\)](#)
- [PHCC](#)



Estuary Forum - 19 November 2024

## Quenda – poo-fect microbe movers!

You've probably heard that many native plant species in the Southwest of WA rely on Mycorrhiza interactions for plant nutrition and that Quenda (Southern Brown Bandicoot) assist in maintaining ecosystem health by turning over topsoils, but did you know that Quenda scat helps Tuart trees survive and grow during adverse conditions?

By growing Tuart seedlings in soil and mixing it with Quenda scat, researchers found that this small digging mammal is the critical link between the Tuart trees and the Mycorrhiza fungi (Hopkins et al., 2021). The researchers found that the spores of fungi from Quenda poo can successfully germinate and colonise the roots of Tuart seedlings after passage

through the Quenda gut. After analysing 53 scat samples, they found that fungal richness of ectomycorrhizal fungi, critical for plant growth, were found at a higher abundance in larger remnants. In other words, the smaller the remnant patch of bushland, the less beneficial mycorrhizal in Quenda poo!

These results reinforce the importance of habitat connectivity and maintaining a dense understorey, as Quenda build a series of tunnels for travel and protection from predators. Maintaining our digging mammal populations within urban landscapes is critical to assist with dispersal of fungi that facilitate ecosystem health of Tuart Woodlands.



Quenda (Image by Natasha Tay)

For more information on encouraging Quenda in your bushland, read DBCA's 'Wildlife Notes' found here: <https://library.dbca.wa.gov.au/static/Journals/080346/080346-05.pdf>



## Funding Opportunity: Fencing and Revegetation of Rural Drains and Waterways

Do you have a property within the Peel-Harvey Catchment Healthy Estuaries WA boundary, that is currently or proposed to be used for grazing?

Does your property contain a drain, stream or waterway that ultimately flows to the Peel-Harvey Estuary?

If so, you may be eligible for funding towards fencing and revegetating your waterways. Fencing stock out of waterways and revegetating the foreshore area is important for the environment and is an opportunity to increase farm productivity. By fencing and revegetating your waterways, you can keep nutrients on the farm, improve stock health, and manage grazing more efficiently.

Join other landholders who have successfully fenced their property drains

and waterways to manage livestock and contribute to improving water quality of the Peel-Harvey Estuary.

Funding for this program is provided to eligible landholders located within the eligible boundary in the Peel-Harvey Catchment area to implement stream restoration (fencing and revegetation) as part of the Bindjareb Djilba (Peel-Harvey estuary) Protection Plan and Healthy Estuaries WA, State Government initiatives to improve the water quality of the estuary.

Project overview can be found here:

<https://estuaries.dwer.wa.gov.au/project/fencing-and-revegetation/>

Map of boundary can be found here:

<https://peel-harvey.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/HEWA-Peel-Harvey-Boundary-1-scaled.jpeg>



PHCC Healthy Estuaries Officer, Bec Mackenzie, with funding recipients

To find out more, email Bec at [waterways@peel-harvey.org.au](mailto:waterways@peel-harvey.org.au)

*This project is part of the Bindjareb Djilba (Peel-Harvey estuary) Protection Plan and Healthy Estuaries WA, State Government initiatives to improve the water quality of the estuary.*

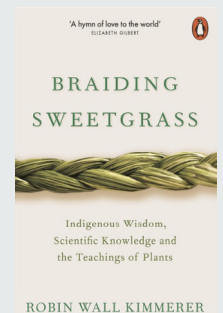
## Book Recommendation – Braiding Sweetgrass

Indigenous wisdom, scientific knowledge and the teaching of plants, this non-fiction book explores reciprocal relationships between humans and the land, with a focus on the role of plants and botany in both North American and Western European traditions.

The book has received largely positive reviews and has appeared on several bestseller lists.

We would love to hear your book recommendations, share them with us.

Email [admin@peel-harvey.org.au](mailto:admin@peel-harvey.org.au)



## New ABC series - Eat the Invaders

Tony Armstrong - with the help of scientists, land carers, an artist and a chef - will attempt to turn our unwanted ecological trash into desirable culinary gold, in a provocative attempt to 'Eat the Invaders'.

Check out the ABC website to watch the trailer to this brand new series coming in 2025: <https://iview.abc.net.au/show/eat-the-invaders>







## Lake Clifton Word Search

E	R	I	N	G	T	A	I	L	P	O	S	S	U	M	S	S	X	T	G	W	Y	X
S	N	S	H	E	L	D	U	C	K	S	V	K	A	N	G	A	R	O	O	R	A	T
T	S	U	N	M	O	T	H	L	A	K	E	C	L	I	F	T	O	N	O	H	L	A
U	L	A	N	D	C	A	R	E	M	A	T	T	E	R	S	U	K	T	S	E	G	W
A	B	L	A	C	K	C	O	C	K	A	T	O	O	O	N	I	K	O	S	R	O	N
R	O	K	X	X	V	S	E	T	I	L	O	B	M	O	R	H	T	W	R	O	R	Y
Y	T	U	A	R	T	W	O	O	D	L	A	N	D	S	E	W	O	G	D	N	U	F
Y	O	V	Q	B	Y	P	G	K	H	O	O	D	E	D	P	L	O	V	E	R	P	R
U	N	B	I	N	D	J	A	R	E	B	D	J	I	L	B	A	D	L	R	G	F	O
Y	A	L	G	O	R	U	P	N	A	T	I	O	N	A	L	P	A	R	K	E	L	G
J	E	L	A	G	O	C	S	A	H	P	D	E	L	I	A	T	H	S	U	R	B	M
I	A	I	S	K	N	A	B	K	C	I	T	S	E	L	D	N	A	C	Z	J	W	O
D	V	E	L	D	T	G	R	A	S	S	D	N	A	L	T	E	W	L	N	B	L	U
U	R	A	M	S	A	R	G	A	L	F	K	C	A	L	B	S	U	L	O	O	D	T
I	S	L	A	N	D	P	O	I	N	T	Y	Y	T	T	E	S	H	Y	T	T	E	H
T	W	A	I	S	K	N	A	B	E	U	C	A	L	Y	P	T	U	S	W	A	M	Z

Find the following words hidden in the puzzle - any direction!

BRUSH TAILED PHASCOGALE

YALGORUP

NATIONAL PARK

CANDLESTICK BANKSIA

BINDJAREB DJILBA

LANDCARE MATTERS

RINGTAIL POSSUM

TAWNY FROGMOUTH

BLACK COCKATOO

THROMBOLITES

HOODED PLOVER

LAKE CLIFTON

ISLAND POINT

JYTTES HYTTE

VELDT GRASS

EUCALYPUTUS

SHELDUCKS

BLACK FLAG

WETLANDS

YALGORUP

KANGAROO

ESTUARY

SUN MOTH

RAMSAR



## Festive Recipe: Sweet Potato & Green Bean Salad – a delicious accompaniment to your Christmas menu!

Soft, roasted sweet potato, tender green beans and caramelised onion are coated with a sweet chilli, balsamic vinegar and garlic dressing.

Serves 4-6 as a side dish.

### Ingredients:

500g peeled sweet potato (about one large sweet potato)

30ml (1 1/2 tablespoons) oil

Salt and pepper

1 large (about 190g) red onion, peeled and cut into about 10 wedges

4 medium garlic cloves, unpeeled

80g (about a handful) of topped and tailed green beans

20ml (1 tablespoon) balsamic vinegar

40ml (2 tablespoons) mild sweet chilli sauce

Preheat oven to 200 degrees Celsius (180 degrees Celsius fan-forced).

### Instructions:

Cut sweet potato into bite-sized pieces.

Place sweet potato slices in a single layer on a large baking tray. Drizzle with 1 tablespoon of the oil and toss to coat potato with oil. Season with salt and pepper. Bake for 15 minutes.

Add onion and garlic to the tray with the sweet potato. Add remaining 1/2 tablespoon of oil and toss everything together. Return tray to oven and cook for a further 20-30 minutes, or until vegetables are tender and onion has lightly caramelised. Turn vegetables once during cooking.

Half fill a medium saucepan with water and bring to the boil. Add beans to saucepan and boil for about 3 minutes, until beans are tender but still a bit crisp. Remove from heat and drain. Place beans in a bowl of cold water for 10 seconds to stop the cooking process. Drain and cut into 4cm lengths.

Squeeze roasted garlic from its skin and place in a small bowl. Mash garlic using a fork. Add balsamic vinegar and chilli sauce to garlic and stir to combine.

Toss dressing, beans, sweet potato and onion together in a large bowl. Serve salad hot or cold. Store any leftover salad in an airtight container in the refrigerator.



## We need your help for the Peel-Yalgorup Shorebird Count 2025

PHCC are looking for passionate individuals to join them for their annual Shorebird count, happening on Sunday 2 February 2025.

If you're interested in contributing to citizen science and helping monitor these amazing birds, they want to hear from you!

To register your interest, click on the following link by Friday 24 January:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/countday>

Got a question?

Contact us at [birds@peel-harvey.org.au](mailto:birds@peel-harvey.org.au)



## Events coming up...

Jan 12 **Meet Dudley Dolphin.** We will be providing free activities for the young kids whilst their older brothers and sisters compete in the Falcon Lions Junior Fishing Competition. Then our popular mascot Dudley will be giving out free copies of his Outdoor Adventures Activity Booklet. Visit <https://mehg.org.au/dudley-dolphin-at-the-falcon-lions-fishing-comp/>

Jan 16 **Secret Life of Reptiles: A Close Encounter with Native Wildlife.** Step into the wild and discover the fascinating lives of Western Australia's reptiles in this engaging school holiday program! Join us in partnership with WA Wildlife for an exciting session at The Wetlands Centre. Learn about the native reptiles that call Bibra Lake home, their unique adaptations, and how we can play a role in their protection. Visit <https://events.humanitix.com/gwaw-reptiles>

Jan 19 **Birdlife WA - Walk, Lake Gwelup Reserve.** Lake Gwelup is within the Northern Swan Coastal Key Biodiversity Area (KBA) for Carnaby's Black-Cockatoo. Bring a chair and morning tea to have while the bird list is compiled. For BLWA members and their guests. Members of the public are welcome to join the walk (bring binoculars). Visit <https://birdlife.org.au/events/birdlife-western-australia-walk-lake-gwelup-stirling-19-january-2025/>

Jan 23 **Citizen Science for Migratory Shorebirds.** Join conservation efforts and help migratory shorebirds! Visit <https://events.humanitix.com/citizen-science-for-migratory-shorebirds>

Feb 2 **World Wetlands Day – A Community Celebration.** Join this free community open day event. Bring your water bottle, comfortable clothing and sun protection. Suitable for all ages, no registration essential. At The Wetlands Centre Cockburn, 184 Hope Rd, Bibra Lake at 8.30am to 11.30am

Feb 6-7 **WA Wetlands Conference 2025.** Now in its 21st year, WA Wetlands Conference stands as one of Australia's largest and most influential gatherings in wetland science, management, and research. Held each year to commemorate World Wetlands Day, this conference brings together experts, practitioners, and enthusiasts to address critical issues facing our wetlands. Visit <https://www.thewetlandscentre.org.au/conference/registration/>

Every Friday **Guided Heritage Walk Of Mandurah.** 11.00am - 12.00pm. Discover the City's history with a free foreshore heritage walking tour. This leisurely walk starts and finishes at Mandurah Museum. Visit <https://www.mandurah.wa.gov.au/explore/mandurah-museum/mandurah-heritage-trails>

Coming soon **Bird Watching For Beginners With Robyn Devenish.** Coming soon to a nature reserve near you. These tailor-made walks are free of charge, but you are welcome to tip your guide at the end if you enjoyed it. Register your interest by emailing [info@mehg.org.au](mailto:info@mehg.org.au)

**Make a Fairy Tern chick shelter.** In conjunction with your local Men's Shed. Register your interest as a participant or a partner: [info@mehg.org.au](mailto:info@mehg.org.au). Download this [PDF](#) for more information about Fairy Terns.

Want to share photos or news about your landcare and restoration projects in the next Lake Clifton Landcare Matters?

Please send your article to [admin@peel-harvey.org.au](mailto:admin@peel-harvey.org.au)



Subscribe to our e-newsletter here:  
<https://peel-harvey.org.au/wattle-quoy/>



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